

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Centerville School District  
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2004-2005**

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**Dates of On Site Visit:** February 1, 2005

**Date of Report:** February 7, 2005

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This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

<b>Promising Practice</b>	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
<b>Meets Requirements</b>	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.
<b>Out of Compliance</b>	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
<b>Not applicable</b>	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

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<b>Principle 1 – General Supervision</b>
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

**Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Data table A – General district information
- Data table C – Suspension and expulsion information

- Data table D – Statewide assessment information
- Data table H – Exiting information
- Comprehensive plan
- Student file reviews
- December child count
- Screening logs
- Staff surveys
- Flow through funds annual application
- Signature page from individual education program (IEP)
- Annual needs assessment

### **Meets requirements**

The Centerville School District has a system based on the comprehensive plan to locate, identify, and evaluate children with disabilities, age birth through twenty-one years, who may need special education. Based on surveys and data support, an effective pre-referral and referral system is in place to ensure students are identified without unnecessary delay.

The district has no private schools; however, if the district did, it would provide for children with disabilities that are eligible for special education and are voluntarily enrolled in private schools by their parents to participate in services in accordance with the requirements of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

When the school district refers or places a child with disabilities in a private school or facility, the special education director attends each meeting on an annual basis in person or via conference call in accordance with requirements of IDEA. The director attends quarterly meetings, as well. In addition, school special education personnel have been involved in out-of-district placements.

The district uses data-based decision-making procedures to review and analyze school district level data to determine if the school district is making progress toward the state's performance goals and indicators. Data was recently reviewed at an October 2004 in-service.

The district has not had a student receive a long-term suspension or expulsion. However, if this should occur, the district would review and analyze discipline data and revise policies/procedures if significant discrepancies are occurring between the long-term suspension and expulsion rates for children with and without disabilities.

Based on the district policies and practices regarding employment and supervision of staff employed or with whom the district contracts, an adequate supply of personnel are employed who are appropriately supervised and fully licensed or certified to work with children with disabilities. The district also has policies and practices in place to determine personnel development needs and to take appropriate action to meet those identified needs.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets requirements**

The review team agrees with the steering committee that the district is meeting requirements for Principle One, General Supervision, with the exceptions listed below.

#### **Out of Compliance**

##### **ARSD 24:05:17:03.1 Annual report of children served**

In its annual report of children served, the district shall indicate the number of children with disabilities receiving special education and related services on December 1<sup>st</sup> of that school year.

The district does not have documentation to verify that services were being provided to one student listed on the district's 2003 child count. Interviews also confirmed there was not an IEP in effect on December

1<sup>st</sup> of 2003 for this student. The Department of Education will withhold from the district the Individual with Disability Education Act (IDEA) federal funds for the misclassified student.

## **Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education**

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Data table I – Age and placement alternative
- Comprehensive plan
- Survey tabulation
- Number of children screened (Pre-school and School age)

### **Promising practice**

Several years ago, Centerville was a **GOLD** Community (Guide to Opportunities for Local Development). At a meeting, strengths and weaknesses of the community were discussed. It was brought up at this time that a different building for housing the public library would be beneficial for the town. After several town meetings, it was suggested by some of the parents from the school district a building be combined with the library and school.

The city received a Federal Government Grant through the South Dakota State Library, and the school's portion was obtained by using money from capital outlay certificates. Memorials and donations were also used in funding the Centerville Community Library. There are many benefits of having a community library such as; funds from city and school, more space and books to access, no duplications of materials, more hours for patrons to use library, it brings adults into the school and it brings adults and students together in a positive environment.

Special programs and significant developments in the library are:

- Library trivia games for public and school
- Different challenges for public and school patrons, such as Read a Ton of Books (books weighed and graphed when checked in) and Falling for Books (a tree is in the library, with book titles on paper leaves in different colors)
- Author visits
- Book talks and Book Club
- Observe Dr. Suess's birthday & other special dates set aside to promote the library, such as a Thanksgiving Feast (skits, songs, plays, stories, and lunch)
- Art exhibits from high school art class & local artists, and classroom exhibits
- Fund raisers for library with school & city involved (Christmas ornaments, silent auction, raffle item, concession at sporting events), and Library Book Grant
- Summer reading program (sidewalk arts contest, zoo mobile, cartoonist, Sioux Falls Canary mascot, etc.)
- Food Pantry donations
- Promote library at homecoming events

**Meets requirements**

The district's comprehensive plan specifies the procedure to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible children with disabilities. The district has no students with disabilities that have been suspended for more than 10 days or expelled. The comprehensive plan outlines the procedure to follow if it would be necessary.

**Validation Results****Promising practice**

The review team validated the Centerville school/community library as a promising practice in the district.

**Meets requirements**

The review team agrees with the steering committee that the district is meeting the requirement for Principle Two, Free Appropriate Public Education.

<b>Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation</b>
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A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

**Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Teacher files review
- Prior notice
- Telephone log
- Evaluation report
- Surveys
- Comprehensive plan
- Review of tests used

**Meets requirements**

Based on file reviews, the school district provides appropriate written notice before assessments are administered to a child as part of an evaluation or reevaluation. The district ensures the evaluation or reevaluation procedures and instruments meet the minimum requirements. File reviews done by the district show appropriate tests were given and students are properly identified for services. The comprehensive plan specifies the procedural requirements to ensure students are appropriately evaluated for continuing eligibility.

**Validation Results****Meets requirements**

The review team agrees with the steering committee that data for Principle Three, Appropriate Evaluation meets the requirements, with the exception of evaluation procedures. See information under: Out of Compliance

### **Needs improvement**

The district is required to ensure, at a minimum, that evaluation procedures include the following: a child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including as applicable, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities. The evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified. File reviews and a staff interview indicated this has not consistently occurred in the past when children three through five are referred for developmental concerns. However, the early childhood teacher, who is employed by the Southeast Cooperative, has taken measures to correct this issue.

### **Out of compliance**

#### **Issues requiring immediate attention**

##### **ARSD24:05:25:06 Reevaluations.**

Reevaluation shall be conducted at least every three years or if conditions warrant if the child's parents or teacher requests an evaluation. Reevaluations must be completed within 25 school days after the receipt by the district of signed consent to reevaluate unless other time limits are agreed to by the school administration and the parents. Each school district shall follow the procedures under ARSD 24:05:25:04.02 when reevaluating a student for the additional purposes of: (1) determining whether the child continues to have a disability; (2) determining whether the child continues to need special education and related services; and (3) determining whether any additions or modification to the special education and related services are needed to enable the child to meet the measurable annual goals set out in the individual education program and to participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum.

Through file reviews and interviews, the review team found that reevaluations were not completed for two students. One student recently moved to the district in the fall of 2004 and is on the December 2004 child count as other health impaired (555). This student has not had a comprehensive reevaluation since 2001. Upon entering the Centerville school district, eligibility for the student was based on an April 2004 evaluation review, which noted no additional evaluation was needed. At a minimum, the district must reevaluate achievement when determining whether the child continues to need special education and related services. In addition, since the student has been diagnosed with attention deficit disorder, a behavioral assessment would need to be completed to determine eligibility.

The district needs to conduct a comprehensive reevaluation in all areas of the suspected disability and determine the students' eligibility and educational needs.

A second student is on the district's child count as autistic (560), which was determined in August 2001. Since that time, various evaluations have occurred; however, the district has not completed a comprehensive reevaluation. File review and staff interview indicated various evaluations were completed, which did not consistently have parent consent, nor were follow-up meetings held to discuss the evaluations consistently documented.

The district needs to conduct a comprehensive reevaluation in all areas of the suspected disability and determine the students' eligibility and educational needs.

#### **Issues requiring immediate attention**

##### **ARSD 24:05:22:03. Certified child**

##### **ARSD 24:05:24:01:14. Other health impaired defined**

A certified child is a child in need of special education or special education and related services who has received a multidisciplinary evaluation and has an individual education program formulated and approved by a local placement committee. Documentation supporting a child's disability condition as defined by Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act must be maintained by the school district for verification of its annual federal child count.

Other health impaired means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness because of a chronic or acute health problem, such as a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, or diabetes that adversely affects a student's educational performance. Adverse effects in educational performance must be verified through the multidisciplinary evaluation process as defined in ARSD24:05:13:01(12).

A student file review completed by the review team indicated that a reevaluation was completed in the January 2004. The disabling condition reported on the child count was not substantiated by documentation within the file. The student's evaluation information did not support meeting the criteria for other health impaired (555). Documentation from a medical doctor is present; however, there is no evidence that the health problem (attention deficit disorder) adversely affects the student's ability to gain benefits from the educational program. In addition, the individual education program (IEP) indicated on the consideration of special factors page that the behavior does not impede learning.

The district needs to conduct a comprehensive multidisciplinary reevaluation in all areas of the suspected disability and determine the student's eligibility and educational needs.

#### **ARSD 24:05:25:04.7-8 Evaluation procedures**

The district is required to ensure, at a minimum, that evaluation procedures include the following: a child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including as applicable, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities. The evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the child's special education and related services needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.

In five of the twelve files reviewed, documentation did not support students were assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability.

### **Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards**

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

#### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Teacher file reviews
- Surveys
- Comprehensive plan
- Parental rights document
- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) disclosure
- Review of access logs
- Consent and prior notice forms

### **Meets requirements**

In the student files reviewed by the district, the Individual Education Program (IEP) front page indicates parents received a copy of parent rights and it was reviewed. Parent surveys indicated they have been fully informed in their native language or another mode of communication (if necessary) of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought. The comprehensive plan outlines guidelines and procedures to ensure the rights of children if no parent is identified.

The district comprehensive plan provides procedures and guidelines on procedural safeguards, which provide the parents of a child in need of special education or special education and related services with the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records concerning the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the child and the provision of a free appropriate public education. The comprehensive plan outlines policies and procedures for responding to complaints and due process hearing.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets requirements**

The review team agrees with the steering committee that data for Principle Four, Procedural Safeguards, meets requirements, with the exception of consent for evaluation. See information under: Out of Compliance

#### **Out of compliance**

##### **ARSD 24:05:30:04. Prior notice and parent consent**

Informed parental consent must be obtained before conducting a first-time evaluation, reevaluation, and before initial placement of a child in a program providing special education or special education and related services.

Consent was not obtained for evaluations administered to students in four files reviewed. For example, an adaptive behavior evaluation was administered but was not included on the prior notice/consent signed by the parent and a transition evaluation was administered without prior notice/consent from the parents.

## **Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Data table K – Early intervention (Part C) exit information
- Teacher file review
- Comprehensive plan

#### **Meets requirements**

Data from parent surveys, prior notice documents and file reviews indicate that written notice is provided for all IEP meetings, and includes all required content. Data also supports the IEP team is comprised of appropriate team membership and meets all identified responsibilities.

Requirements in comprehensive plan, review of the IEP form and file reviews indicate the IEP contains all required content. The comprehensive plan outlines proper procedures, which ensures that appropriate IEPs are developed for students.

### **Needs improvement**

Although file reviews indicate transition is addressed, the district believes improvement in the development of transition plans for students could be made. Areas that indicated some concerns were the course of study for students, which should state classes, and inviting representatives from other agencies to participate in the IEP meetings for students of transition age.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Promising practice**

The review team identified the Rural Job Shadowing Program as a promising practice.

The Rural Job Shadowing Program provides a “shadow” job experience for seniors in the Centerville School District. The ninth grade students complete a career class in the high school. Within this class, the students do research and choose a career they would be interested in pursuing. In English class, the students write resumes, cover letters, and thank you notes to the business/job they shadow for. Student choices are matched with business partner locations, primarily in the Sioux Falls area, but students have also been sent to Vermillion, Viborg, Yankton, and Beresford. Students are transported by bus to the business partner locations for the major portion of a normal workday. The Shadow counselors monitor the work required before shadowing, and also the follow-up after the experience. Although the program is not a requirement, participation has most often been 100% in the district. Although a fee is charged for the program, no student has ever been declined due to lack of funding. The district may include the shadow experience in students’ individual education programs when appropriate. On occasion, the shadow program coordinator, Ranah Sample, works with the special educators to provide additional shadow experiences to some students as a transition activity. Several very positive experiences have been shared by many of the district’s students on IEPs. In some cases, a job opportunity has come out of the shadow experience.

### **Meets requirements**

The review team agrees with the steering committee that data for Principle Five, Individualized Education Program meets requirements.

### **Needs improvement**

The review team agrees with the steering committee that the area of transition needs improvement. The majority of files reviewed met compliance for transition issues. However, one student file reviewed in which the student was fourteen did not have outcomes and course of study address. This student’s annual IEP meeting was going to be held in the very near future at which time these issues would be addressed.

## **Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment**

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**



Data sources used:

- Data table F – Placement alternatives
- Parent, student, and teacher surveys
- File review

### **Meets requirements**

File reviews reflect the district ensures that all children receiving services are in the least restrictive environment with the supports that they might need for successful participation.

### **Needs improvement**

The district needs to improve by providing services to all children in the least restrictive environment with the supports they need for successful participation. Data submitted to the state indicated that preschool services need to improve in this area. There are no preschool programs in our area where children with disabilities could attend for instruction and interact with children without disabilities.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Needs improvement**

The review team validated the steering committee's finding to improve preschool services to children in the least restrictive environment with the support they may need for successful participation. Staff interviews indicated the district has been discussing options for preschool services. Although, the district meets the requirement for LRE, exploring options for improving delivery of services is beneficial for children.

### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with the steering committee that the district is meeting the requirements for Principle Six, Least Restrictive Environment.